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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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### EXPERIMENTS IN SELF-DETERMINATION

SIR,—Attica and the Isthmus of Corinth are frankly Albanian, as travelled classical antiquarians well know, tho' Athens and Corinth be Greek. Native Egypt is mainly Moslem; but Alexandria is Greek again; so it was under Cleopatra, from whose wholly Greek ancestry it took the reckless credulity of a Hawthorne to manufacture an African in *The Marble Faun*. Turkey in Europe, once a great empire, now the atrophied fragment of a dying exarchate, was always peopled by more Christians than Turks; the latter, however, have a plurality in Constantinople which a transfer of the Ottoman court and capitol to Broussa would undo.

Towns large and small, and especially cities sitting at gateways of international trade like seaports and railway centers, often shelter an alien population that forms an ethnological island. One has heard of a "Saxon" Hermannstadt in the heart of Roumanian Transylvania, of a long-drawn battle between its Czech and German burghers for the control of Prague, of Lemberg's majority of Polish burghers in the Ruthenian section of Galicia. Silesia, Posnania and the two Prussias are studded with German colonies that swarm thickest within town walls. German publicists claim 88 per cent of the town population at Bromberg and 95 at Danzig. Grant 25 points to the juggled census reports which Hans Delbrück acknowledges in his *Regierung und Volksville*, and for the planted official and military element, and to further exaggerations if you like. The Teuton color remains dominant and indelible, and difficult to reconcile politically with the Polish tinge of the contiguous open country. The Versailles Peace Commission has adopted the remedy of according local statehood to the port of Danzig; this arrangement leaves it loosely subject to the Polish Republic in federal affairs, very much as it was between the First and Second Partitions of Poland in the 18th century. For even the timid souls which handled the Versailles horror, as they call it in Germany, perceived that a resurrection of Poland without insuring its control of the whole basin of the Vistula was a geographical absurdity, and so laid one of their troublesome racial phantoms to rest by the altar of horse sense. They have given other undisputed local ethnologies the same raw deal, with equal propriety, in Südtirol and Bohemia, without the palliative of a local statehood.

So far, so good, in the main. In Istria and the other disputed allotments facing the Adriatic Sea, they have had a victorious and

potent ally to placate or to override, instead of a defeated enemy, and have allowed consistency and sound principles to go by the board, to conform with an imperialistic treaty.

In that quarter, Orlando, yourself, and Congressman La Guardia (whom we all love) notwithstanding, the upshot of antebellum census figures makes it reasonably clear that the old Austro-Italian boundary line was fairer to the racial connections and preferences of the populations in question than the new compromises now under discussion are. I withhold the blue-prints you once invited Orlando's opponents to produce; but here are some figures. They make it plain that the local *Italianity* of Trieste, Gorizia, Fiume and Zara is no different in character from the racial insularity of Danzig and Lemberg, and ought to be discounted by statesmen for the same reasons. The Slovene place-names of the Italian advance across the famous Carso or Karst plateau, beginning with that word itself which is the Slavonic word for cliff, might well give us pause at the outset.

I borrow my ante-bellum census figures from Rivet's recent volume *En Yougoslaire*, merely reducing his needless units to round thousands. The date of the last Austrian census was 1910. It credited:

City of Trieste and suburbs with 119,000 Italians, 57,000 Slovenes, 2,000 Serbs and Croats, and 13,000 scattering; Görz, Goritsa or Gorizia with 148,000 Slovenes as against 18,000 Italians; Gradisca with 72,000 Italians and Friulians as against 6,000 Slovenes. These two countries together counted 155,000 Slovenes versus 90,000 Italo-Friulians.

Trieste with its 2:1 ratio and Gradisca with 5:3 are clearly Latin strongholds. But the moment the opener country of the ancient marquisate of Istria is considered, the relation of the two chief elements of the population is reversed: 223,000 Slavs hold their own against 147,000 Italians.

Fiume proper had about 25,000 Italians to 16,000 Slavs in 1910, the contiguous suburb of Sushak about 11,000 Serbo-Croats and 1,000 Italians. Italy's historical claim is hollow. The whole Italian colony at Fiume was only 1,000 souls in 1849. Inland, one can almost say there are no Italians to speak of in a population wholly Slav.

How little the Orlando Government was troubled by the racial occupation and preferences of any territory it covered is sufficiently revealed by its persistence in proposing to take half the coast-line of Dalmatia for "the lion of St. Mark," where the Serbo-Croatian inhabitants number a total of 650,000 souls, as against an Italian total of 18,000. It is true that Italian critics dispute the perfect sincerity of the Austrian Government's census figures, with good reason as I believe. But let us suppose they are right in their feeling that the Italian total ought to have been 30,000. If so, the Italian colonies muster between 4 and 5 per cent of the population of Dalmatia, hardly enough to justify minority safeguards or privileges. The whole problem could have been justly settled by according Gorizia to Italy as a prize of war, and by the creation of one free city acknowledging the same suzerainty as its rural neighbors, whose commerce it handles, that city being Trieste. A colony of 30,000 aliens has no sound right

to statehood, and certainly it has no right to independence.

I conclude that the territorial and strategic concessions which Versailles has hitherto made to Italian pretensions at the head of the Adriatic are tributes to force and favor only, and should stop being put forward as experiments in self-determination. Let us call things by their names.

Washington, D. C.

ALFRED EMERSON, PH.D.

## THE SORBONNE INVITES AMERICAN STUDENTS

MONSIEUR,—

Je suis certain que les milieux si intellectuels et si distingués où est lue votre grande revue seront intéressés par l'annonce de ces Cours qui constituent une véritable innovation de la part de la vieille Université de Paris. C'est un événement dans sa vie, car vous savez qu'elle n'aime pas les nouveautés. Il a fallu que la terrible catastrophe de la guerre vienne secouer sa sereine indifférence pour qu'elle daigne s'apercevoir de la foule des étudiants étrangers qui remplissent ses salles et ses amphithéâtres sans trouver toujours un enseignement adapté à leurs besoins.

Espérons que maintenant, ils auront ce qu'ils venaient chercher et qu'une satisfaction aussi entière que possible leur sera donnée; le programme des Cours est composé dans ce but et complète celui des Cours normaux de l'Université toujours ouverts aux étudiants Américains.

Je vous remercie par avance de ce que vous pourrez faire pour informer le public de l'ouverture de nos cours, et je vous prie d'agréer l'expression de mes hommages respectueux.

T. DE BARDY,

Secrétaire du Comité de Patronage des Etudiants et du Bureau  
des Renseignements Scientifiques de l'Université de Paris.  
Paris.

## L'UNIVERSITE DE PARIS ET LES ETUDIANTS ETRANGERS

Un voeu déjà ancien des étudiants, des voyageurs cultivés, de tous les amis de la France, est en voie de réalisation: l'Université de Paris s'organise pour accueillir largement les étrangers.

Le 3 Novembre 1919, elle inaugure des Cours organisés spécialement pour répondre aux besoins des étrangers studieux.

A la Faculté des Lettres, ce sont des Cours de CIVILISATION FRANÇAISE, professés par des Maîtres de la Sorbonne et donnant en un semestre de quatre mois une idée générale de l'histoire de France, de sa littérature, de sa géographie, de ses doctrines philosophiques et sociales, de son art.

Cours aussi utiles au spécialiste des Lettres qu'à l'étudiant étranger des autres Facultés, intéressants même pour l'étranger de passage désireux de connaître et de comprendre le pays qu'il visite.

A la Faculté de Droit, ce sont des cours *d'initiation* à l'étude du Droit français et des cours *abrégés* sur les institutions principales de la France (famille, propriété, système d'impôts, régime colonial).